

### REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

Claims 1-16 were pending in this application. In this Amendment, Applicants have withdrawn claims 4 and 10-16, which are directed to non-elected species. Applicants have also canceled claim 1, amended claims 2, 3, and 5-9, and added new claim 17. Accordingly, claims 2, 3, 5-9, and 17 (and withdrawn claims 4 and 10-16) will be pending herein upon entry of this Amendment.

In the Office Action mailed November 26, 2003, the Examiner objected to the numbering of Figures 5-8 and 11. The Examiner also rejected claims 1, 5, and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite, and rejected claims 1-3 and 5-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over various combinations of German Patent DE 9417837 to Muller et al. ("Muller"), U.S. Patent No. 5,632,588 to Crorey et al. ("Crorey"), U.S. Patent No. 5,520,502 to Liljengren et al. ("Liljengren"), European Patent No. EP 180,050 to Brake ("Brake"), and U.S. Patent No. 3,958,740 to Dixon ("Dixon").

To the extent these rejections might still be applied to the claims presently pending in this application, they are respectfully traversed. The objections and rejections are addressed individually below under corresponding subheadings.

**Drawings and Specification:**

In the Office Action, the Examiner objected to Figures 5-8 and 11 as improperly numbered and improperly noted in the "Brief Description of the Drawings." In response, Applicants have corrected Figures 5-8 and 11, as well as Figure 10, to properly refer to the incremental figures (*i.e.*, 5A, 5B, etc.) included within each figure. Replacements sheets reflecting these corrections are attached. In addition, Applicants have amended the "Brief Description of the Drawings" consistent with the drawing corrections.

**35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph (claims 1, 5, and 6):**

The Examiner rejected claim 1 as indefinite for various reasons. In response, Applicants have canceled claim 1 and added new claim 17, which recites generally the same subject matter of canceled claim 1. Applicants have drafted new claim 17 with an eye toward compliance with §112.

The Examiner also rejected claims 5 and 6 as indefinite for their recitation of the limitation "teach in." In response, Applicants have amended claim 5 and 6 to replace this limitation with clearer language. Specifically, amended claim 5 recites that the pre-programmed path is programmed by an operator's actually transferring the gripping mechanism through a work cycle. Similarly, amended claim 6 recites that the control computer in the control unit can continuously be re-programmed by manually controlling the gripping mechanism to move into chosen situations. Support for these amendments can be found in the present application at, for example, page 8, line 32 through page 9, line 26.

In light of these new and amended claims, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the currently pending claims comply with 35 U.S.C. §112.

**35 U.S.C. § 103(a) (claims 1-3 and 5-9):**

The Examiner rejected claim 1 as unpatentable over Muller in view of Crorey.

Applicants have canceled claim 1 and added new claim 17, which recites generally the same subject matter as canceled claim 1. To the extent this rejection might still be applied to new claim 17 and its dependent claims 2, 3, and 5-9, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

New claim 17 recites a method for transferring a work object in which a robot unit collects the work object and guides the transfer of the work object along a pre-programmed path, through continuous control and registration of the situation of each of the rotor units of at least two motors. The rotor units are connected to drive wheels for a single continuous drive belt, which drives the robot unit. The transfer of the work object is effected along an essentially horizontally extending beam, with the work object collected in a position situated beyond the beam. The pre-programmed path and continuous control and registration enable the present invention to achieve required displacement precisions at reasonable costs and production rates. (See, e.g., specification at page 4, lines 2-14.) Notably, these features are neither taught nor suggested by the applied references.

Muller was the primary reference applied in the Office Action. Muller relates to a device for moving an object, in which motors at both ends of a gantry carrier drive pulleys, which in turn drive a belt. A horizontal carriage travels on the gantry carrier in the y-direction. A lifting

carriage is adjusted along the horizontal carriage and travels in the z-direction. The belt runs around pulleys of the horizontal carriage and lifting carriage. The motor-driven pulleys at the ends of the gantry carrier drive the belt and move the horizontal carriage and lifting carriage accordingly.

Muller fails, however, to teach or suggest the guiding of the work object along a pre-programmed path, through the continuous control and registration of the situation of each of the rotor units of the motors, as is recited in new claim 17. Furthermore, none of the other applied references teaches or suggests this aspect of motor control. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that new claim 17 is patentably distinguishable over the applied references. In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2, 3, and 5-8 are patentably distinguishable due at least to their dependency on new claim 17.

With respect to amended claims 3 and 8, Applicants further submit that none of the applied references teaches or suggests the provision of first and second gripping elements (or units) that are able to simultaneously pick objects at two different locations. In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claim 3 as unpatentable over Muller in view of Liljengren and Brake and rejected claim 8 as unpatentable over Muller in view of Crorey and Dixon. None of these references teaches, however, the use of two gripping elements capable of simultaneous picks. Indeed, incorporating two gripping elements enables the present invention to use the first gripping element to pick an object from a first press and the second gripping element to place the object in a second press. The two gripping elements are also useful in accomplishing intermediate storage, when switching an object from the first gripping element to the second

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gripping element. The two gripping elements enable the present invention to simultaneously pick two objects at two different locations (*e.g.*, a first press and an intermediate storage), which is an aspect not found in the applied references. (*See, e.g.*, specification at page 5, lines 21-27.) Applicants therefore respectfully submit that amended claims 3 and 8 are patentably distinguishable over the applied reference due at least to this two gripping element feature.


In view of the foregoing all of the claims in this case are believed to be in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any questions or determine that any further action is desirable to place this application in even better condition for issue, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

BLOMGREN ET AL.

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Attachments: Drawing Replacement Sheets

MDB/SPA/kmh